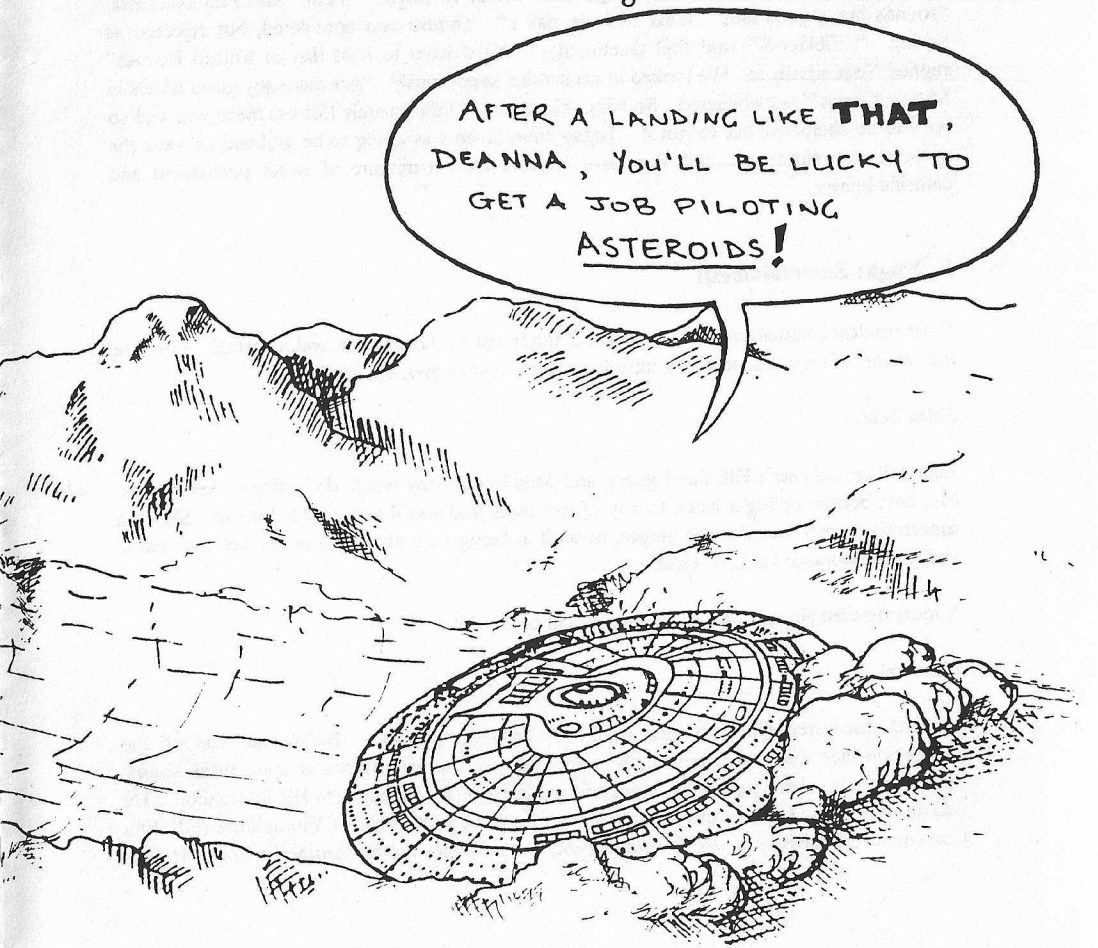
MILTON KEYNES IN 1996

OBLITER-8

2-4 February 1996

The Eighth Annual U.K. Filk Convention



Progress Report 1

Welcome Aboard

This is, as it hopefully says on the cover, Obliter-8 Progress Report 1, which if you've already joined serves little purpose other than to convince you that we still exist, and that you've done the right thing by giving these lunatics your money. If you haven't joined, then please send us your money! We will of course be at Confabulation and ***The Scottish Convention***, but if you won't, or don't feel you'll have any money to spare then, then you'll find the address and membership prices etc. here.

Lift Off

"How do you feel about running the filkcon after next?" said Ninja just before we went home from VIbraphone - "we can probably get Julia Ecklar as GoH". "Yeah!" said Phil and Lissa, "sounds like a good idea. What will we call it". *Octave* was considered, but rejected as boring. "...Obliter-8?" said Phil facetiously. "We'd have to hold that in Milton Keynes" replied Ninja equally so. We looked at each other suspiciously. "Are there any good hotels in Milton Keynes?" we wondered. So Ninja checked ... Unfortunately (for us) there was and so we had no alternative but to run it. Teddy thought he was going to be grabbed (always the optimist) so volunteered, and Tom was coerced with a mixture of sweet persuasion and calorific bribery.

In Flight Entertainment

Your resident entertainers for the weekend flight will be Julia Ecklar and Minstrel. I'm sure that neither of these will need any introduction to most of you, but here goes...

Julia Ecklar

Julia will be this year's Filk Fund guest, and little I could say would do justice to her talents. Just buy, borrow or beg a listen to any of her tapes and you'll know what I mean. She is a superb songwriter and glorious singer, as well as being an author both under her own name and (in collaboration) as L.A. Graf.

A more detailed bio, and disk/bibliography will be in PR2.

Minstrel

Minstrel discovered filk (and vice versa) at Follycon in 1988. Before the end of the convention they were both thoroughly corrupted, and he had written at least three songs. Since then he's written quite a few more and made major contributions to UK filk fandom. He was in the groups *Flatline* and *Razing Arizona*, on the committee of VIbraphone (UK Filk Con 6), hosts the BBS *Minstrel's Hall of Filk*, and produces the filk fanzine *Filklore*. He has

produced his own tape *The Boy in the Room* and is part of the *Partners In Rhyme* group that is recording several new tape projects, including the forthcoming VIbraphone tape(s).

His songs run the full range from serious to stupendously silly, and are inspired by a very diverse set of subjects. He is also one of the few people rash enough to frequently retune their 12 string between songs, an act of bravado most people have good Reasons to avoid.

Yourselves

Yes you! What do you want to see or do on the programme? Having two members on the committee *Phoenix* are obviously in a good position to ask for a slot, but is there anyone else out there who wants to put together a session as well, whether as formal group or just an arranged gathering? If so, please let us know, so we can best fit you in.

Also, Valerie Housden is working on putting together a harmony session, so ideas, requests, arrangements or offers there would no doubt be appreciated.

The Crew - by each other...

For some reason *(frankly a complete mystery to me)* none of the other members of the committee seemed entirely happy with the idea of Phil's writing all the bio's on his own. So we threw names in a hat and drew at random. It seemed such a good idea up to that point...

Robert Maughan (aka Ninja Bear) by Phil Hotel Liaison

Claims to be token responsible adult on this committee, and occasionally manages a reasonably convincing facsimile thereof. Was all HIS FAULT (honest!) so he gets lumbered with hotel liaison and general spokespersonning type jobs. Besides he does a better Mr Nasty on the hotel than the rest of us, being professionally qualified in such things.

Has a singularly warped and twisted imagination (from me that's a compliment!) and a mother who makes committees very nice Sunday lunches. One of the very few people to embarrass Auntie Sue in public, even if it was all her fault (and how was Foreplay for you Robert?).

Make no mistake though, underneath that suave and sociable exterior lies the sort of man who'd sell his own mother (*Phil - what I sold her was a con* <u>*membership*</u> *- true, but it made better copy this way*).

Lissa Allcock by FanTom Membership

What can safely be said about Lissa? Especially bearing in mind that she is writing about me. Can I mention that no packet of Oreos is safe in her presence? Or that committee meetings (and possibly some committee members) are much improved by being dipped in her white chocolate fondue?

I think I'm safe mentioning that as percussionist for Phoenix (she is *much* too intelligent to be a drummer) Lissa has the uncanny ability to work out new routines and mysteriously get better without having to practice between rehearsals - and plays chief skins, man.

She is inordinately fond of felines (*trans:* she likes cats) as her two are well aware. Oh, and she's married to Phil, which goes some way to keep him under control - but not much.

I think I'd better leave it there before I die slowly.

Philip Allcock **by Teddy** **Publications** *(that's me)*

I'd heard about this person by reputation long before I was able to put a face to the name. He apparently specialised in filking others' songs, sometimes so fast he was performing his refilk at the same con as the first performance of the original. It says a lot about Phil as a person that nobody has lynched him - yet- despite grievous provocation.

Aside from his obvious talent as a filker, what can I say about Phil? He has legs that look great in heels and leather mini-skirts (his wife's...er...that is her skirts and heels, not her legs...though hers look great in them too... oops, this is meant to be his bio not hers) He's the sort of husband who buys clothes as surprise presents for his wife, secure in the knowledge that they will fit her because he tried them on first. I know, 'cause I was there. (*Teddy, that was a waistcoat - true, but it made better copy this way.)*

Phil also has the sort of wiggle, when he walks, that hints at the promise of wonderful things, though I haven't succeeded in persuading him to follow through on the promise, and he couldn't look convincingly innocent if his life depended on it.

He also takes these remarks in remarkably good humour. (*you hope!*)

Teddy **by Ninja** **Treasurer**

Teddy is an unusual member of an unusual committee. The good news is he volunteered for the traditionally unpopular job of treasurer. The bad news is his previous committee experience was as official pet for one of the Masque costuming cons. This may not strike you as particularly relevant experience for handling a convention's finances. However he does have a diploma in finance and business administration so he is probably the only member of the committee with a qualification relevant to his post. He is also one of the two artists on the committee.

Teddy is one of the leading contenders for best legs in fandom and as a skilled costumer has plenty of tasteful outfits (*and many others*) to show them off. He has graced many con masquerades, on occasion hotly pursued by the more enthusiastic of his fans. I could name names but that would be Speculation on my part (*Besides, she might sue...*). Teddy spends his spare time ~~rebuilding~~ 'tastefully' redecorating his flat, learning the trapeze, washing up, vamping cute guys and being generally irrepressible (*help, help, I'm being irrepressed*). He wishes it known that the trapeze class has nothing to do with his alleged chandelier fetish.

FanTom **by Lissa** **Programming**

There is no truth at all in the rumour that we invited Tom on to the committee just to keep Teddy worn down. Well, hardly any. Nor indeed as an excuse to serve up white chocolate fondues, pancakes or other fattening delights at committee meetings. After all, I've never needed an excuse for chocolate of any variety!

Our first flyer noted him as in charge of computers, which confused him somewhat until we reminded him that he had agreed to do programming. He actually works for the Spanish Inquisition (which of course we didn't expect) - or at least something to do with commissioners of the church.

Tom is our other committee artist, as well as being a prolific songwriter, and another ~~troublemaker~~ committee member likely to be caught in possession of tunes that didn't belong to him (most of which he performs a capella though he is getting better on his guitar). He is not as practiced at looking innocent, but somehow more likely to be believed... He is another avid costumer (you can see why he's going out with Teddy) and is the member of the committee most likely to be in period costume at any given moment.

Purser's Report - Transept Accounts

Here are the accounts for Transept, as of 14th February 1995.

Item	Income	Expenditure
Membership pre-convention	£1346.00	
Returned cheque		£22.00
Hire of Function Rooms		£825.00
PR 1 and 2 Mailing		£44.60
Hire of Technical Equipment		£172.00
Day Memberships	£112.00	
Guest Rooms		£210.00
Presents and Prizes		£67.00
Food and Drinks		£85.65
Sundry Income - badges etc.	£10.00	
Badge Blanks		£18.00
Interest on account	£1.82	
Total	£1469.82	£1444.25

Net Profit £25.57

Anne Whitaker - Transept Treasurer

The Ship

by Ninja

Phil says I ought to describe the hotel to you, so here goes. It is a four storey building on the corner of Saxon Gate West and Mid Summer Boulevard in central Milton Keynes... *(er - that's not quite the sort of description I had in mind and you know it!).*

Okay (spoilsport!). The Forte Creste is a four star hotel with 163 bedrooms. This means that we can cope with up to 326 members which is rather more than we are expecting. Though they did say we could use the Atrium if we overflowed the main function room.

The rooms are spacious and have all the facilities one expects from a good hotel these days; kettle, hairdryer, iron, and trouser press,. All the rooms can be booked as single, twin, or double as you want. Room rates will be £30 pppn for doubles or twins, and £40 for singles. The room keys are actually keycards which means each occupant gets their own as new ones can be cut on demand. We do not want you to spend the con locked in your room but if you decide to you should have a very comfortable weekend.

Assuming we can pry you out of your room you then have to face the other distractions the hotel has to offer. These distractions include, a pool, two restaurants and the bar. The pool is about the usual size for a hotel pool, but they do sell ice creams just outside by the health club. The restaurants are one good but cheap and one excellent but pricey. The bar deserves a more detailed description; it has a large quantity of seating mostly on leather sofas that are more comfortable than some hotel beds I have slept in. There is plenty of room to eat and drink or just to hang around and chat. The bar stocks Directors as standard and will have an extra real ale for the weekend. The hotel will be stocking orange juice by the pint and does wonderful coffee for a reasonable price. I will not bother with the details of the solarium and gymnasium as I was too lazy to investigate them, but like the pool they are open to all residents.

Assuming you make it past all the distractions you will eventually reach the programme rooms. Main programme is rated for 150 theatre style and has a convenient secure storage room attached. The acoustics in the main room are good enough that the local chamber orchestra have used the room for recitals. In addition we have two secondary rooms for practicing, talks and workshops, a possible dealers' room, a con office and another storage room.

Well, that should give you some idea of the setting for the convention. I am still negotiating on a wide range of issues from children and pets to use of the baby grand in the atrium but I expect to have agreement on most points in the next month or so. The next PR will carry instructions on how to book a room and ask you the usual questions about diet and other special needs. I am confident we can offer you a very pleasant weekend even before the music starts. My only remaining worry is telling the hotel what the convention is really called...

Passengers (as of 1/4/95)

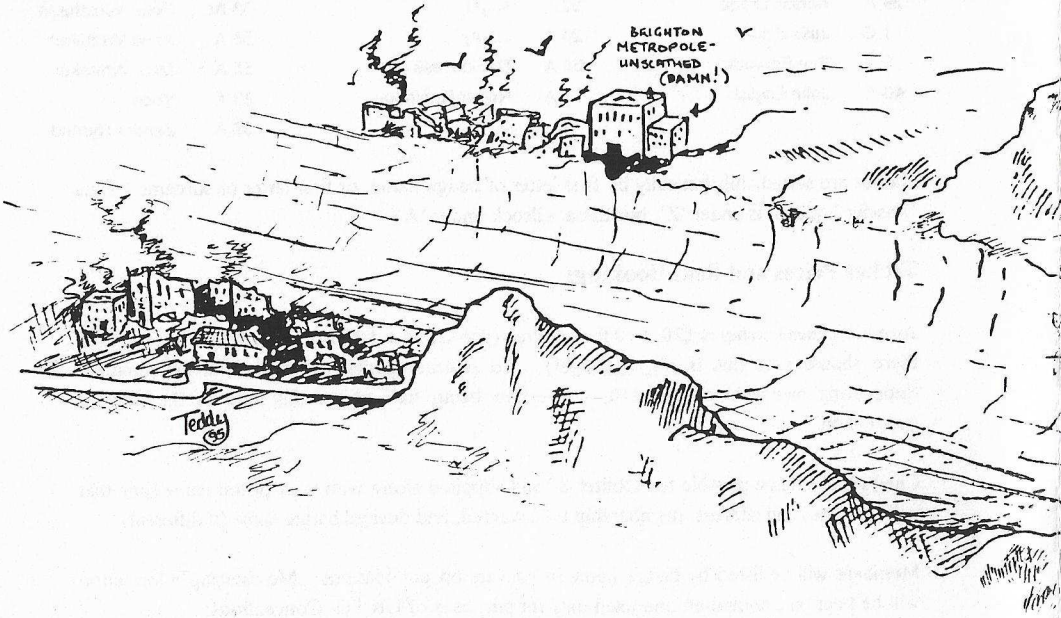
4 C	Lissa Allcock	7 C	FanTom	50 A	Tony Rogers
5 C	Philip Allcock	64 A	Brian Flatt	43 A	Jean Sheward
17 A	Andy	65 A	Gwen Funnell	23 A	Joey Shoji
53 A	Auntie Sue	16 A	Martin Gordon-Kerr	47 A	Smitty
12 A	Andrew Barton	61 A	Linda Hansford	71 A	SMUG
68 A	Diana Joan (DJ) Bass	66 A	Hitch	13 A	Kate Soley
27 A	Chris Bell	22 A	Valerie Housden	72 A	Square Bear
28 Ac	Kenneth Bell	60 Ac	Julian Humphries	44 A	Kathy Sterry
29 Ac	Rachel Bell	59 A	Susan Humphries	63 A	Barbara Stewart
49 A	Michael Bernardi	18 A	Rhodri James	62 A	John Stewart
37 A	Jenny Blackburn	20 A	Keris	41 A	Marcus Streets
42 A	Susan Booth	2 G	Minstrel	40 A	Rae Streets
25 A	Paul Bristow	51 A	Marion	6 C	Teddy
14 A	Roger Burton-West	46 A	Keith Martin	67 A	The Magician
58 A	Countess Axylides	8 A	Jean Maughan	69 A	Tiama
15 A	Rafe Culpin	3 C	Robert Maughan	70 A	Tim Walker
52 A	Steve Davies	54 A	Melusine	45 A	Peter Wareham
21 A	Robert Day	11 A	Miki	34 Ac	Karen Westhead
19 A	Guilia de Cesare	73 A	Nick G	31 A	Kathy Westhead
10 A	Lawrence Dean	35 A	Nicky	32 A	Mike Westhead
24 A	Kerstin Droge	39 A	Nigel	33 Ac	Peter Westhead
1 G	Julia Ecklar	26 A	Nojay	56 A	Anne Whitaker
9 A	Sue Edwards	30 A	David Peek	55 A	Mike Whitaker
48 A	John English	36 A	Roger Robinson	38 A	Yooh
				57 A	Zander Nyrond

Names are sorted alphabetically by first letter of badge name, or first letter of surname. Thus 'Zander Nyrond' is under 'Z', but Lissa Allcock under 'A'.

Ticket Prices and Seat Bookings

Attending membership is £20, £10 for children (pre-GCSE), free for under fives (optimists out there should note this is physical age!). No unaccompanied asteroids will be admitted. Supporting memberships are £10, conversion being half of the full rate at the time of conversion.

Cheques should be payable to "Obliter-8" and supplied along with your postal name (one that will find you) and address, membership type wanted, and desired badge name (if different).

Members will be listed by badge name in convention publications. Membership information will be kept on a computer, and used only for purposes of UK Filk Conventions.

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